

Serial No. 09/827,303
Reply to Office Action of January 6, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for sharing knowledge and information amongst a plurality of users that can be either online or offline, said method comprising:

compiling said knowledge and information into data objects, said data objects defining logic trees that represent the cumulative knowledge and information regarding a plurality of situations that are expected to be encountered by said users, said logic trees representing diagnosing algorithms, survey questions, and/or troubleshooting instructions that are given to help field personnel recognize appropriate questions sets to use in a particular situation and how to ask those questions in a logical manner;

storing said data objects in a central database in a network; and
providing electronic access to said database with a plurality of client devices, said client devices being adapted to store locally a copy of each of said data objects for offline utilization by said users with said client devices wherein changes to any of said data objects stored in said central database are automatically reflected in said local copies of said changed data objects through a synchronization process that occurs whenever said client device accesses services provided by said network.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said synchronization process includes the step of uploading survey data stored in said client devices,

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said survey data having previously been collected in response to surveying instructions provided by one or more of said data objects.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said data objects define a diagnostic function such that said client devices are adapted to automatically analyze data obtained from an electronic source.

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said data objects are encoded in said database using coding selected from the group consisting of extensible markup language or tokenized strings.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said client devices are adapted to access services provided by said network by connecting to said network over a wireless data network, and wherein said synchronization process occurs whenever said client devices connect to said network wirelessly.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said users can optionally connect to said network and utilize said data objects stored in said database in real-time.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 6, wherein said user connects to said network using a web browser.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 7, wherein said web browser is running on a device selected from the group consisting of an online wireless client device or a wired Internet connected device.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said synchronization process runs on said client device as a background process.

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10. (Currently Amended) A system for sharing knowledge and information amongst a plurality of users that can be online or offline, said system comprising:

a central electronic information network having a database and a server, said database containing a plurality of data objects and said data objects defining logic trees that represent the cumulative knowledge and information regarding a plurality of situations that are expected to be encountered by said users, said logic trees representing diagnosing algorithms, survey questions, and/or troubleshooting instructions that are given to help field personnel recognize appropriate questions sets to use in a particular situation and how to ask those questions in a logical manner; and

a plurality of portable client devices, said client devices each storing copies of said data objects locally for utilization by said users on demand, wherein

whenever a given client device connects to the central network for any reason, said given client device synchronizes its data object copies with those in the database such that any recent changes to said data objects stored in said database is reflected in said client devices' during offline sessions.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Original) The system according to claim 10, wherein said portable client devices comprise mobile computing devices adapted to connect to said network over a wireless data network.

13. (Original) The system according to claim 12, wherein said client device has a touchscreen display and wireless communication hardware.

14. (Original) The system according to claim 10, wherein said client device has a local connection means for obtaining diagnostic input data from an

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electronic source, and wherein said data objects define a diagnostic function such that said client devices are adapted to automatically analyze data obtained from said electronic source.

15. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 10, wherein said data objects are defined using coding selected from the group consisting of extensible markup language or tokenized strings.

16. (Original) The system according to claim 10, wherein said users can optionally connect to said network and utilize said data objects stored in said database in real-time.

17. (Original) The system according to claim 16, wherein said user connects to said network using a web browser.

18. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 17, wherein said web browser is running on a device selected from the group consisting of an online wireless client device or a wired Internet connected device.

19. (Original) The system according to claim 10, wherein said data object copies are synchronized by a process that runs on said client device as a background process.

20. (Original) The method according to claim 10, wherein said client devices are adapted to access services provided by said network by connecting to said network over a wireless data network, and wherein each said client device synchronizes its data object copies whenever said client device connects to said network wirelessly.